

HINDI IMPOSITION PAPERS

Volume 10

**Hindi Imposition by Hook or by Crook
(Indirect Hindi Imposition)**

Thanjai Nalankilli

HINDI IMPOSITION PAPERS

Volume 10 **Hindi Imposition by Hook or by Crook** **(Indirect Hindi Imposition)**

edited by
Thanjai Nalankilli

Copyright Thanjai Nalankilli 2019

This book or any chapter in the book may be copied, distributed, reposted, reprinted, translated or shared in print, electronic, digital, internet or other media. No permission needed from copyright holder.

•

AUTHORS

K. Roy (1)
Parameshwari Balakrishnan (1)
Sharada T.P.K. (1)
Thanjai Nalankilli (11)
Vimala Kannappan (1)

Numbers in parentheses indicate number of articles by the author in this volume.

Hindi Imposition Papers

All You Wanted to Know about Hindi imposition and More

This fifteen-volumes book contains over 100 articles on the subject of Hindi imposition in India. Researchers, scholars, historians and students who want to get an in-depth understanding of India's language policy may go through these articles one by one. Others may casually browse through these volumes, stopping to read those articles that interest them. You may find lots of interesting and useful information in these articles.

Even if you are reading these articles a hundred years from now, these articles will tell you the history of the development and evolution of India's Hindi imposition policies and opposition to it, starting from 1938 to 2019. This is part of Indian history. India's language problem is an ongoing problem. We do not know where all this will lead to and how this will end.

Table of Contents

[Preface](#)

1. [Hindi Infusion and Infiltration into Everyday Life \(Indirect Hindi Imposition\) \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
2. [Hindi Advertisements in Non-Hindi Newspapers: Does it Make Sense? \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
3. [Outrageous Hindi Imperialism at State Bank of India \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
4. [Two Forms of Hindi Imposition at Banks: Eleven Examples \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
5. [Unconstitutional Language Policy along National Highways \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
6. [Opposition to Hindi at Joint State-Central Government Projects in India \(Metros in Bengaluru, Chennai, Kochi, Kolkata\) \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
7. [Telegraph Service in Hindi and English Only \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
8. [Hindi on Chennai Television \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
9. [Hindi in Television: A Comparison of Bangladesh and West Bengal \(India\) \(by K. Roy\)](#)
10. [No Sari, No Idli: South Indians Go to Hell! \(by Sharada T.P.K.\)](#)
11. [Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat or Hindi-fy India Programme? \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
12. [Indirect Hindi Imposition Through Hindi Project Names \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
13. [Why Hindi People Insist on and Tamil People Oppose Hindi Signs in Tamil Nadu? \(by Thanjai Nalankilli\)](#)
14. [Central Hindi Directorate and Your Tax Money \(by Parameshwari Balakrishnan\)](#)
15. [Hindi and State Languages in Airline Flights \(by Vimala Kannappan\)](#)

[List of the 15 Volumes of Hindi Imposition Papers](#)

[List of More Free E-Books from Us](#)

Preface

Thanjai Nalankilli

Forced Hindi imposition is forcing non-Hindi Indian government employees to learn Hindi under threat of disciplinary action [See Volume 5]. That is direct Hindi imposition.

Hindi is imposed by subtle indirect means too: make life difficult if you do not know Hindi or English. An example is posting Hindi safety posters in trains. Another example is Hindi in bank ATMs and bank deposit forms. Too many Hindi programmes in government run television (doordarshan) in non-Hindi states is another example.

Flooding non-Hindi states with Hindi, with taxes collected from non-Hindi peoples, seems to be Indian government tactic. If you have any doubt about who is paying for all the Hindi imposition and Hindi propagation, here is some statistics. For every 100 Rupees Indian government collects in taxes from Tamil Nadu, only 40 Rupees is given back to Tamil Nadu in the form of financial grants, central government projects, etc. Now compare it to the Hindi state of Uttar Pradesh. For every 100 Rupees Indian government collects in taxes from Uttar Pradesh, 176 Rupees is given to Uttar Pradesh in the form of financial grants, central government projects, etc. Other South Indian states also are economically discriminated similarly. [The above data is from Reference 1].

Hindi is thrust into non-Hindi areas through everything that Indian government touches, for examples, nationalized banks, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), Indian Railways, National Highways, Air India, Government Television (doordarshan) and Central Security Forces posted in non-Hindi states.

A number of examples of indirect Hindi imposition are discussed in this volume.

REFERENCE

Reference 1: The News Minute: 14 July 2016

[
<http://web.archive.org/web/20160715145421/http://www.thenewsminute.com/article/unit-ed-states-south-india-can-southern-collective-get-us-better-deal-delhi-46501>]

(First Published: July 2019)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for Chapter 1

1. Hindi Infusion and Infiltration into Everyday Life (Indirect Hindi Imposition)

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Nationalized Banks
3. LIC and Other Government Owned Insurance Companies
4. Indian Railways
5. National Highways
6. Broadcast Television (Doordharsan)
7. Central Security Forces
8. Hindi Advertisements
9. Project Names in Hindi

1. Introduction

Hindi infusion and infiltration are different from Hindi imposition. They are all discriminatory and make life a little or lots difficult for non-Hindi peoples of India. In fact, Hindi infusion and infiltration are indirect forms of Hindi imposition pushing Hindi into unwilling non-Hindi throats. Direct Hindi imposition is forcing non-Hindi employees of Indian government and its public sector undertakings (PSU) to learn and work in Hindi under threat of punishment [See Volume 5]. This article is about the infusion and infiltration of Hindi into everyday activities, day-to-day living of non-Hindi peoples of India.

Wherever Indian government goes Hindi comes with it. Hindi is infused into everyday life through, for example,

- (1) Nationalized Banks,
- (2) Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC),
- (3) Indian Railways,
- (4) National Highways,
- (5) Government Television (Doordharsan), and
- (6) Central Security Forces.

Employees of all these institutions are required, under penalty of disciplinary action, to learn and to do a certain percentage of work in Hindi, even in non-Hindi states. These institutions and Indian government offices employ millions of people and Hindi is forced into the throat of every one of them. Now, how does India's language policy affect local people who have to use these institutions in day-to-day life? Almost all of us use one or more of these institutions regularly.

2. Nationalized Banks

Most nationalized bank forms are in Hindi and English only, and thus making it difficult for those who do not know either Hindi or English to do bank transactions. Also there are many out-of-state bank employees who do not know the state language, thus unable to communicate with local customers. In fact one bank's customers in Karnataka were attacked by a bank employee because the customer wanted to communicate with him in the state language, Kannada. (TheNewsMinute.com; August 15, 2018)

3. LIC and Other Government Owned Insurance Companies

Situation at the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and other Indian-government owned insurance companies is the same as in nationalized banks. Forms are in Hindi and English only. There are many out-of-state employees who do not know the state language.

S. Suresh Kumar, member of the Karnataka State Legislative Assembly (MLA) wrote to the Indian government labour minister about Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESI Corporation) that provides health insurance services to workers in Karnataka. He said that ESIC was hiring employees from outside the state who do not know the state language Kannada and these employees are not able to communicate with workers and their families in Kannada language. He asked the minister to direct ESIC to hire from Karnataka State. (Letter Number HO/1025/2015, dated November 14, 2015)

4. Indian Railways

Indian Railways is another culprit in infusing Hindi into non-Hindi states. It would seem that Indian Railways operates for the benefit of Hindi people only. Millions of non-Hindi peoples use it, yet many rail tickets are printed in Hindi and English only. We had tickets printed in English and local language during British rule. Now, alas, many rail tickets are printed in Hindi and English only in non-Hindi states. Reservation lists are posted in Hindi and English only in non-Hindi states. Outrageous over outrageous, they are posted in Hindi only in some railway stations in Hindi states. Also posters and boards about rail safety and dangers are in Hindi and English only. Do you know that safety instructions on cooking gas cylinders used by millions of peoples in non-Hindi states are in Hindi and English only?

5. National Highways (NHAI)

National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) is another institution used to push Hindi into non-Hindi states. It plays "now-you-see, now-you-don't" game in non-Hindi states. One day you see only Hindi and English on a stretch of highways in a non-Hindi state (no state language). If there is no reaction from people, it would be permanent. If there are protests, the local language would reappear. A few years later you see only Hindi and state language (no English). If local people and business protest because out-of-state

visitors may not know Hindi or state language, English would reappear. This game is going on for a while now. It should end. Highway milestones must be in the state language and English. If I do not see Kannada milestones in Uttar Pradesh, why should there be Hindi milestones in Karnataka? State language for local people and English for visitors. Why should Hindi people have the special privilege of Hindi everywhere in India? Do they claim some superior citizenship? Let them learn English or never get out of their states.

6. Broadcast Television (Doordharsan)

Indian Government controlled Television (Doordharsan) is another vehicle used to infuse and inject Hindi into non-Hindi areas. National programmes broadcast all over India are mostly Hindi with some English; there is no place for other languages except for an occasional (very rare) broadcast of a non-Hindi movie.

Doordharsan started regional broadcast centres and channels, presumably, to broadcast regional language programmes. Yes, these centres do broadcast non-Hindi shows but also Hindi shows. What is the need for Hindi programmes in regional channels? There are so many Hindi shows in national channels. Here is an outrageous example. Back in the 1980s, Chennai Doordharshan centre in Tamil Nadu started broadcasting Hindi News at prime nighttime while Tamil News was broadcast later in the night. The then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran (MGR), one of the most popular leaders of all time in Tamil Nadu, protested. Fearing a massive agitation in the state, Doordharsan agreed to broadcast Tamil News at prime time.

7. Central Security Forces

Indian central security forces include Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Railway Protection Force (RPF). Although Indian Coast Guard (ICG) comes under the Defense Ministry it comes into contact with fishermen and others who go into the sea. The central security forces and coast guard operate in both Hindi and non-Hindi states but many of its employees do not know the state language where they serve. It creates undue hardships to non-Hindi peoples in their own states. While many of the security forces personnel do not know the state language, non-Hindi personnel are forced to learn Hindi. What is the purpose of learning Hindi if you are posted in Tamil Nadu or Karnataka or West Bengal or any other non-Hindi state away from the Hindi belt? Is it not better to teach them the state language? India's language policy is putting non-Hindi peoples at risk. **Are we not paying taxes?** How can a rail passenger ask for help in an emergency if Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel do not know the state language? It is for the security personnel to learn the language of the people. But, in the twisted Indian government language policy, it wants people to learn the language of a people living a thousand miles away.

A Tamil Nadu fisherman died in March 2017 because personnel at a nearby Indian Coast Guard ship did not understand the emergency phone call in Tamil (See Chapter 5 of this

Volume). Blood of that fisherman lies directly at the illogical Indian Government language policy.

8. Hindi Advertisements

Another tool that Indian Government uses to thrust Hindi into non-Hindi states is to place government advertisements in Hindi in non-Hindi newspapers. A few Hindi advertisements from the Indian government started appearing in Tamil newspapers around 2006. Why would any reasonable person place advertisements in Hindi in Tamil newspapers in a state where very few people know Hindi? The purpose of these advertisements is not to inform the people about government projects but to throw Hindi at them using their own tax monies. Southern railways, owned by Indian Government, even placed safety related advertisements in Hindi in Tamil newspapers. Also safety warnings in train compartments are in Hindi and English only. Indian government is putting non-Hindi peoples at risk of injury and death through its Hindi zealousness. God, is there an end to it? [Indian government is putting non-Hindi peoples at risk of injuries and death in many more ways as discussed in Chapters 1-5 of this Volume.]

We have heard that Hindi advertisements are being placed in Kannada newspapers in Karnataka State also. In the past few years, large advertisement billboards with Hindi advertisements are also placed along busy roads in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. What a waste of our money?

9. Project Names in Hindi

Giving Hindi names to Indian government projects is another cunning method to force Hindi on non-Hindi peoples. Chapter 12 of this book gives 47 such project names. Here is the first name on that list: "Aawas Yojana". I have no idea what that name means. Part of my tax money goes to fund this project. If I do not know what that project is, how can I use it or benefit from it?

My suggestion is that Hindi names should be used in Hindi documents (with English names in parentheses), English names in English documents (with Hindi names in parentheses), Bengali names in Bengali documents (with English and Hindi names in parentheses), etc.

(First Published: March 2019)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

2.

Hindi Advertisements in Non-Hindi Newspapers: Does it Make Sense?

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 14 also because of its relevance there.]

We published this article originally in February 2007 wondering the wisdom of Indian government placing Hindi advertisements in non-Hindi newspapers, even in Tamil newspapers most of whose readers do not know Hindi. Would it not serve the purpose better if the advertisements were in the same language as the newspaper? Things are getting crazier. More and more of our tax monies are going to be wasted on placing Hindi advertisements in non-Hindi newspapers. On June 30, 2017, Indian government issued an order asking all its ministries and departments to have a Hindi version of every advertisement that they release either in English or in a regional language. (Economic Times; July 21, 2017). Now go on and read the original article below.

Advertisements in Hindi appeared in some Tamil newspapers published and sold in Tamil Nadu in 2006. Why would any reasonable business place advertisements in Hindi in Tamil newspapers in a state where very few people know Hindi?

Purpose of an advertisement is to tell consumers of a product or service, with the intent of influencing them to buy the product or service. So the advertisement should be in a language the consumer understands. So placing advertisements in Hindi in Tamil newspapers in Tamilnadu does not make any business sense. Will a Japanese car maker place a Japanese advertisement in Tamil newspapers in Tamil Nadu? No, it would not. If the advertisement department were to place such an advertisement, the department manager would be dismissed for wasting company money. Yet a company placed Hindi advertisements in Tamil newspapers in Tamil Nadu? What is this company?

The company that placed Hindi advertisements in Tamil newspapers in Tamil Nadu is the Southern Railways, owned and operated by the Indian Government.

Now it all makes sense and we understand the reason. **The purpose of those Hindi advertisements is not to tell readers about Southern Railways' services and induce them to travel more by train, the purpose is to throw Hindi at their faces.** The Hindi politicians who dominate and thus control the Indian Government are very unhappy that Tamil people oppose Hindi as India's official language and that Tamilnadu State controlled schools do not teach Hindi. So they are throwing Hindi at our faces through Hindi advertisements and other means (Hindi television programs, Hindi drug labels, etc.) Another purpose is to immerse Tamil people in Hindi until they choke in it.

All-India broadcasts of the Indian Government controlled free television (Doordharshan) are primarily Hindi 24 hours a day. You can see over a dozen Hindi programmes anywhere in India any time of the day. That is not all. Even Doordharsan regional channels within Tamil Nadu broadcast more Hindi movies than Tamil movies. **Does it**

make sense to broadcast more Hindi movies than Tamil movies in channels available only in Tamil Nadu? Television ratings consistently show that viewers prefer Tamil movies over Hindi movies by a huge margin. It makes more sense to broadcast Tamil movies in Tamilnadu. That would also bring in more advertisement revenues. But that is not what the Indian Government does. Why? To throw Hindi at Tamil people's faces and immerse them in Hindi. There is no other valid reason.

It is this kind of arrogant, single-minded, concerted efforts by the Indian Government to impose Hindi on Tamil Nadu by hook and by crook, directly and indirectly, overtly and covertly that is further building resentment among Tamil people. One day that resentment could burst like a fire breathing volcano.

UPDATE: Southern Railways (July 2012)

Indian Railways placed a Hindi advertisement again in the Tamil daily newspaper Thinathanthi on May 24, 2012; Thinathanthi has the largest number of readers among Tamil daily newspapers. This Hindi advertisement asks rail travelers not to carry inflammable articles in trains. A rough translation of this Hindi advertisement is as follows: "Small articles lead to big accidents. Please do not carry inflammable articles during your rail journey. Indian Railways --- Your safety ... Our aim." As we asked in 2007 when we published this article first, we ask again, what is the purpose of placing a Hindi advertisement in a Tamil language newspaper, very few of whose readers know Hindi? Will it not make sense to place advertisements in Tamil in a Tamil language newspaper published in Tamilnadu?

There is more to it than the waste of taxpayer money. **Tamil rail-passengers are not getting this useful safety message because it is in Hindi.** Is Indian Railways interested in the safety of Hindi speakers only? Would it not be better to publicize this safety message in Tamil in Tamil Nadu? In the name of establishing Hindi supremacy all over India, it is blacking out this useful safety message to non-Hindi speakers. People do get injured sometimes when inflammable materials like kerosene are carried in trains without proper safety precaution. There are people who are unaware that carrying inflammable materials like kerosene in trains is not a good idea. So this safety-related advertisement is an useful public service message. But because it is published in Hindi, people are not getting this useful message. Indian Railways' attitude seems to be, "Learn Hindi if you want to benefit from our safety messages." This is Hindi arrogance of the worst kind.

(First Published: February 2007; Updated August 2017)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

3. Outrageous Hindi Imperialism at State Bank of India

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 7 also because of its relevance there.]

Indian Government owned State Bank of India (SBI) sent cell phone messages in Hindi (no Tamil, no English) to some customers in Tamil Nadu. Thanthai Periyar Drivar Kazhagam (TPDK) members demonstrated in front of an SBI branch in Coimbatore. (Ananda Vikatan (Tamil magazine); December 27, 2017)

This is a major problem for non-Hindi customers. Now they are at a loss as to what is going on with their bank accounts. Is there a seemingly fraudulent activity needing immediate attention? Is the account over-drawn needing immediate attention? Non-Hindi customers are at a loss to know.

Non-Hindi peoples' repeated requests that Indian government offices and enterprises (such as banks) communicate with people in their mother tongue have fell into the deaf ears of Indian government. But Hindi is everywhere in these banks and other enterprises in non-Hindi states.

(First Published: July 2018)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

4. Hindi Imposition through Banks: Eleven Examples

Thanjai Nalankilli

[Some of the information in this article may also be found in an article in Volume 5 because of its relevance there.]

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Hindi Imposition on Bank customers
3. Eleven Examples

1. Introduction

Indian Government, under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, nationalized over a dozen banks in 1969. Thus the Indian Government became the owner and operator of these banks, employing tens of thousands of employees and serving lakhs of customers (1 million = 10 lakhs). As usual, **once the Indian Government gets its hands on something, it becomes a vehicle for imposing Hindi on non-Hindi peoples.**

2. Hindi Imposition on Customers

In addition to imposing Hindi on Indian government owned bank employees to pass Hindi examinations and do at least some correspondence in Hindi, bank customers to suffer through Hindi.

Deposit forms, application forms and passbooks in many banks located in non-Hindi states are in English and Hindi only. Automated Teller Machines (ATM) are also in English and Hindi only in most locations. Where is the state language that most local people know? If you do not know English or Hindi, you have to beg other customers or bank employees to help you with these forms and ATMs. A Hindi person who is from a distant land 1000 miles away can transact business in his/her mother tongue but a native whose house is 1000 feet from the bank may not be able to use his/her mother tongue. Is it fair? Is it just?

We list some news items from the last few years. This is by no means a complete list. We also want to point that some of the items we listed might have been rectified after immense pressure from people and politicians from some non-Hindi states. At the very same time more Hindi imposition actions would take place in other areas. The measure of Hindi imposition is whether more Hindi use in Indian government offices and enterprises (banks, railway, etc.) this year than the last. That surely is the case until the time of this writing (early 2019).

3. Eleven Examples

3.1 Why no Native Malayalam at Banks in Kerala?

Aksharam Kala Sahithya Vedi organized a demonstration in front of State Bank of India demanding Malayalam be used in bank forms in Kerala (The Hindu; June 8, 2013). Bank forms are in Hindi and English only in State Bank of India.

3.2 No Kannada at Banks in Karnataka

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara wrote to Indian government Finance Minister Arun Jaitley pointing out that bank challans ("deposit form"), application forms, procedural documents and ATM kiosks are available only in English and Hindi in most banks. He said that this is a "systematic discrimination" (NewsMinute.com; August 15, 2018)

3.3 Arrogance of a Bank Employee in Kolkata (Calcutta)

A HDFC Bank customer in Kolkata (Calcutta) in West Bengal filed a complaint with the bank about a bank employee. According to the complaint, a bank employee asked this customer to fill out the bank form in English or Hindi. When the customer insisted on filling the form in Bengali (the state language), the bank employee told the customer to learn the languages [English or Hindi] or go to Pakistan or Bangladesh. (www.NewsBits.in; August 30, 2018)

Although HDFC is not owned by Indian government, it comes under the jurisdiction of Reserve Bank of India (RBI). RBI has a duty to enforce that customers are able to do transactions in state language. It is failing to do so.

May be this arrogant employee should learn the state language Bengali or go to England or a Hindi state to earn his/her living.

On a serious note, laws should be enacted or Indian constitution amended to require that proficiency in the state language is a pre-condition for employment in private and government institutions. An employee should know the language from day-one of employment.

3.4 Bank Staff Attack Customer for Wanting to Use Kannada in Karnataka

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara said last week that a man was attacked by a bank staff in Kolar for asking to carry out a transaction in Kannada. (TheNewsMinute.com; August 15, 2018)

3.5 IDBI Bank Uses Hindi and also Violates the Constitution

Some IDBI Bank offices in Karnataka added Hindi signs on some boards (there is no state language Kannada added) in 2016. The numerals are not in the international

numerals but in Devanagiri numeral. This is unconstitutional because constitution was clear that official language is Hindi in Devanagiri script with international numerals.

3.6 Hindi Awards at Reserve Bank of India

Speaking at a meeting on the 50-th anniversary of the Rajbhasha Department at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the RBI governor announced three new awards (cash prizes) of 1.25 lakh Rupees (125000 Rupees) each for original Hindi books on economics, banking and finance (Huffington Post (India); May 25, 2016).

How about prizes for banking related books in other Indian languages? Don't we want those languages to develop into the modern age too? After all, non-Hindi peoples pay taxes to the Indian government too. Why this discrimination?

3.7 Punjabi to be Ousted from Punjab and Sindh Bank Branches

Indian Government issued a circular that all the administrative work at Punjab and Sindh Bank branches should in Hindi instead of Punjabi (Sikh Siyasat News; March 17, 2017).

3.8 "Text Us in Hindi or English" says State Bank of India

State Bank of India asked its Tamil customer to text them in English or Hindi. After an uproar in tweets, the bank said that calls to local bank landline could be made in the local language. (TheQuint.com; January 5, 2018)

So Non-Hindi peoples have to use the outdated 20-th century technology of landlines and the modern 21-st century cell phone technology is for Hindi people only.

3.9 Kannada Check will not be Accepted in Karnataka

A man in Karnataka wrote a check in Kannada (official language of the state) and gave to LIC for premium. When LIC deposited it, ICICI Bank refused because it was written in Kannada. He filed a complaint with the district consumer court. (Times of India; January 26, 2017). (LIC - Life Insurance Corporation - owned and operated by Indian Government)

ICICI is not an Indian government owned bank but it comes under the jurisdiction of Reserve Bank of India (RBI). RBI must enforce the use of state languages in all banks operating in India.

3.10 Where is State Language in Bank Pass Books?

At Indian government owned banks you can update automated passbooks in Hindi or English only. (India Express; January 28, 2017)

3.11 Lawsuit for Bank Forms in State Language

A public interest litigation petition has been filed in the Madras High Court seeking a direction to the Union Finance Ministry and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to ensure that all kinds of challans, forms and applications in public sector as well as private banks were printed in Tamil also in addition to English and Hindi. (The Hindu; March 6, 2017)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has told the Madras High Court Bench that it had issued a circular way back in December 2005 itself instructing the banks in the country to use English, Hindi as well as the regional language in all printed materials, including account opening forms, pay-in slips, passbooks and so on used by the customers. (The Hindu; July 7, 2017)

What is the use if banks do not follow RBI circulars? What is the purpose of RBI issuing circulars if banks do not follow them? RBI has dozens of Official Language Officers (Rajbasha Adhikaris) with the sole responsibility of making sure that more and more Hindi is used in banks. Appoint an officer in each state to enforce RBI rules on the use of state language. Why this step-motherly treatment of non-Hindi languages. We pay taxes too.

(First Published: February 2019)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

5. Unconstitutional Language Policy along National Highways

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 11 also because of its relevance there.]

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. What is Wrong with Hindi-Tamil Road Signs
3. Why English Highway Signs are Preferred over Hindi Signs?
4. It is Unlawful and Unconstitutional
5. Should we have English Signs in Hindi States?
6. What Shall We Do?
7. Punish the Lawbreakers
8. Refusal to Correct or Repeat Offense

1. Introduction

National Highways had signs in English and the state language. Then Hindi was added to it although there was opposition to it in some non-Hindi states. Recently, in some parts of the Tamil Nadu State, signs are posted in Hindi and the state language Tamil only; for example, National Highway in Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu in 2014. Notice that there is no English. This may be the situation in some other states also or would soon be, unless this ILLEGAL action is stopped now.

2. What is Wrong with Hindi-Tamil Road Signs

Tamil travelers within Tamil Nadu would have no problem if Indian National Highway road signs are in Tamil and Hindi. They can read Tamil. What about travelers from Karnataka (Kannada speakers) or from West Bengal (Bengali speakers) or from other non-Hindi states? They would be at a loss if they do not know Tamil or Hindi. If they also have to travel through Andhra Pradesh, they would have to know either Telugu (the state language) or Hindi. So travelers from non-Hindi states must know all the state languages they pass through or Hindi. Thus knowledge of Hindi becomes essential if you ever have to travel outside of your own state. **This is Hindi imposition.** This is ILLEGAL under the various laws enacted by parliament over the years (discussed in some detail in Section 4 of this article).

The signboard in the photo has some important information such as phone number to local hospital, ambulance and police station. **Not being able to read the information could be life-or-death in an emergency situation.**

If the national highway signs are only in the state language, how will out-of-state travelers understand them. There should be English language road signs. Does it not

require knowledge of English? All you are doing is requiring a knowledge of English instead of Hindi. True. Most people from non-Hindi states, especially in southern and eastern India, prefer English over Hindi. Why?

3. Why English Highway Signs are Preferred over Hindi Signs?

Why do most people from non-Hindi states, especially in southern and eastern India, prefer English over Hindi? Reasons are two fold.

(1) Most non-Hindi people in south and east know English better than Hindi. I am not saying every non-Hindi person from these regions knows English. Absolutely not. More people in south and east know English than Hindi. I may be correct to say that anyone who knows Hindi in the south or east also know English. That is why we want English signs on national highways throughout India.

(2) With knowledge of English, you can not only travel to all states in India, you can also travel to any major city in the world, whether it is New York in America, or Tokyo in Japan, or Berlin in Germany or Moscow in Russia. So, what is the need for Hindi? None. Hindi is an unnecessary burden on non-Hindi peoples of India.

Not only English road signs makes sense, it is also the law. Posting signs in Hindi and the state language only (without English) is UNLAWFUL and UNCONSTITUTIONAL.

4. It is Unlawful and Unconstitutional

Indian constitution and several Official Language Acts (laws) passed by Indian parliament guarantees the right of non-Hindi peoples to communicate with the Indian government in English. This includes the right to have national highway signs in English anywhere in India. State governments can put their signs in any language they choose but Indian government institutions must have English signs. This includes signs, boards and instructions in all Indian government institutions including central government offices, banks, insurance companies, post offices, railway stations, airports and national highways. English signs should be posted not only in non-Hindi states but also in Hindi states for the benefit of non-Hindi travelers to those states.

This right of English signs is guaranteed under the Indian constitution and laws and the Indian government cannot remove English in National Highways or other Indian government institutions. That is unlawful and illegal

If the government wants to change the Hindi-English two-language policy to Hindi only one-language policy, it has to pass new laws in the parliament or amend the Indian constitution, as appropriate. Until that time, English signs must stay.

5. Should we have English Signs in Hindi States?

English signs should be posted not only in non-Hindi states but also in Hindi states for the benefit of non-Hindi travelers to those states. If Hindi states are so averse to English signs, they may secede from India and form their own country and have a one-language (Hindi) policy. As long as they are part of India, they should obey the constitution and laws or pass a new Hindi-only law in the parliament.

6. What Shall We Do?

What can we do to put back English signs in National Highways? It seems that English signs are removed in only a few places. It is extremely important that we stop it right now. Otherwise English signs will be removed throughout India. Once Highways are done, English signs would be removed one by one from post offices, railway stations, airports, banks, insurance companies, etc. This may take 10 or 20 years but will be done. So it is important that we stop it and reverse it NOW.

What can we do? Here are my suggestions:

#1) Not many people know that English signs are removed from some National Highways. It is not reported in major newspapers. Write to your favourite politicians and ask them to complain to the Prime Minister and President of India. Letters from popular regional politicians could change the situation. Remember that when, in May 2014, the Indian Government issued a memorandum that government postings in social media, like Facebook, Twitter, may be done in English and Hindi, or Hindi only, there was an outcry from Tamil Nadu political leaders including the former and present chief ministers. Kashmir chief minister also came out against it. Responding to the outcry, Prime Minister's office issued a statement that the memorandum was misunderstood and that both English and Hindi would be used.

#2) Write to Members of Parliament (MPs) to raise the issue in parliament.

#3) If #1 and #2 do not happen, arrange peaceful public demonstrations. 50 people demonstrating in just one city may or may not help because newspapers may not report it. So if possible, coordinate demonstrations in at least a dozen cities each with at least a few hundred people. If possible arrange demonstrations in several non-Hindi states. This would catch the attention of newspapers and politicians. It is important that demonstrations are peaceful and does not inconvenience people by marching through streets blocking traffic, etc. Such demonstrations will turn the people against such demonstrations and be counter-productive.

After #1, 2 and 3, or simultaneously, petition the high court or supreme court to ask the Indian government to obey the law and put back the English signs and **also restrain the Indian government from removing English signs from Indian government institutions in the future**. I am not a lawyer but I think the such lawsuits may be filed by any citizen or state government. Of course state governments have more resources and do it better but private petitions may be filed.

7. Punish the Lawbreakers

It is not enough to put back the English signs along National Highways. The government official who ordered the removal should be punished. If the order came from a minister, the minister should be asked to resign or dismissed. If the order came from an official, he/she should be dismissed and the information given to news organizations so that we know that the culprit is punished. This would be a warning to other officials not to issue illegal orders. This punishment phase is important to prevent future illegal Hindi imposition.

What if the order came from the Prime Minister? Should he/she resign? It would be a good example if he/she resigns but asking the highest elected official to resign over highway signs may be a little too much. We will make a one-time exception. He/she may issue a public apology and promise that he/she would never issue an unlawful order.

8. Refusal to Correct or Repeat Offense

REFUSAL TO CORRECT: Suppose the government refuses to put back the English signs even if the Supreme Court finds it illegal to remove the signs? Then there are constitutional grounds for the President of India to dismiss the government. The President may then ask someone else to show majority support in parliament and become the Prime Minister, or call for a new parliamentary election.

REPEAT OFFENSE: Suppose the government puts back the sign along Highways under supreme court order, but, after a few months, removes English signs in railway stations or in some other ways violate the official languages acts, what then? I believe that the President of India has sufficient grounds to dismiss the government. Will the President do it?

The function of the government (administration) is to act according to the Constitution of India and laws passed by the parliament. It cannot amend the constitution or make new laws. Only the parliament can do that.

(First Published: September 2014)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

6. Opposition to Hindi at Joint State-Central Government Projects (Metros in Bengaluru, Chennai, Kochi, Kolkata)

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 13 also because of its relevance there.]

OUTLINE

Abbreviations

1. Background
2. Whose Money is Funding Metros and Other Joint State-Centre Projects?
3. Is Hindi Use a Form of Hindi Imposition or Hindi Imperialism?
4. Who Benefits from Hindi Signs in Metros?
5. What We Want is Language Equality
6. Why Should Hindis Receive Special Treatment Over and Above Telugus in Bengaluru?
7. Victory at Bengaluru Metro (Namma Metro)
8. Keep Hindi out of Metros in all non-Hindi States Permanently
9. Can Hindi Imposition-Imperialism be Stopped in India? A Test

Abbreviations

AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
BJP - Bharatiya Janata Party
BMRCL - Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited
CLEAR - Campaign for Language Equality And Rights
DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
KRV - Karnataka Rakshana Vedike

1. Background

There are three types of government projects in India:

- (1) Indian Central Government Projects,
- (2) Joint Central-State Government Projects, and
- (3) State Government Projects.

Indian Central government projects are funded and managed by the central government, although state governments do contribute some funds to some of these projects. These projects are in matters that come under the "central list (union list)" in the Indian constitution. Joint Central-State government projects are usually in matters that come under the "state list" or "concurrent list". Joint Central-State government projects are funded by both. State government projects are in matters that come under the "state list". They are wholly funded by state governments occasionally with some central government grant.

Hindi imposition at Indian Central Government Projects, like Indian Railways, is well known. Not only Hindi is in all sign boards and communications but employees are forced to pass tests in Hindi and prodded to do more and more work in Hindi. This article is about Hindi imposition or Hindi use in Joint Central-State Government Projects.

2. Whose Money is Funding Metros and Other Joint State-Centre Projects?

One reason given for putting Hindi signboards on metros and other joint state-center projects is that part of the money for these projects come from Indian government (central government). Does Indian government money mean "Hindi people's money" and thus Hindi people have the right to have their language on metros? Indian government gets the money from taxes paid by all the people of India (Hindi and non-Hindi peoples). In fact most non-Hindi states pay more in taxes and get back less in benefits from the Indian government.

Here is some hard data from year 2016 [Reference 1]. Let us compare the 3 Hindi-belt states that give less and get more from Indian government with 3 Southern states that give more and get less. For every Rs. 100 that Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh pays in taxes to India, they get back from India (in the form of central projects, joint state-centre projects, grants, etc.) Rs. 179, Rs. 96 and Rs. 75. In contrast, for every Rs. 100 that Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka pays in taxes to India, they get back from India Rs. 25, Rs. 40 and Rs. 47, respectively. It is clear from the data that these non-Hindi states are not getting any money from Hindi-belt states but are giving money to them. So if money is the criteria Hindi-belt Uttar Pradesh should have Malayalam (Kerala), Tamil (Tamil Nadu), Kannada (Karnataka) signs and not the other way.

So the argument that any project in non-Hindi states receiving funds from Indian government should have Hindi signboards has no merit.

3. Is Hindi Use a Form of Hindi Imposition or Hindi Imperialism?

The most visible central-state projects are the rapid transit systems (metros) in major cities (for example, Kolkata (Calcutta), Kochi (Cochin), Bengaluru (Bangalore), Chennai (Madras),...). Hindi has been used in name boards (along with English and state language) in most Joint Central-State government projects in the past few years. India's Union Ministry of Urban Development issued an order in December 2016 that all metros in non-Hindi states should have signs in Hindi (NDTV Website; June 24, 2017). This made Hindi signs in Joint Central-State government projects mandatory. In the opinion of this writer, when non-Hindi states are forced to use Hindi in their cities, that is Hindi imposition; if not Hindi imposition then definitely Hindi Imperialism.

4. Who Benefits from Hindi Signs in Metros?

The only people who benefit from Hindi signs in metros, be it Bengaluru (Bangalore), Chennai (Madras), Kochi (Cochin) or Kolkata (Calcutta), are the Hindi people who visit

these cities or Hindi migrants who come to these cities to make a living. By forcing non-Hindi area metros to use Hindi name boards, Indian government makes it easy for Hindi migrants to live, work and make a living in non-Hindi cities without learning the local language. Only Hindi people are given this privilege to go anywhere in India and get along with only their mother tongue. No other people in India, be it Telugus, Kannadigas, Bengalis, Marathis, Gujaratis, Tamils, Malayalis, ... can do that.

This makes Hindi people superior over and above all others. This makes non-Hindi peoples second class citizens in their own home-states. We oppose that. We say, **"If you come to our state to make a living, you should learn our language"**.

There is no need for Hindi in metros in non-Hindi states. There is no need to pamper Hindi people all over India. There is no need to give them an elevated position, elevated status in India. They are equal to us. Let them learn our languages when they come to work in our states, in the same way we learn Hindi when we go looking for jobs in their states.

5. What We Want is Language Equality

There are those who say that there is nothing wrong in putting Hindi on Metro signboards as long as Kannada is also there. I say to them, "I will put Hindi on Bengaluru Metro when they put Kannada in Delhi Metro". Reciprocity. You use our language in your Hindi lands, we will use your language in our lands. Reciprocity. Equality. If my people have to learn English or your language to come to your land, then you should also learn English or my language to visit my land. That is equality. Are we not all citizens of India? Are we not all equal? Or, do you think Hindi people have some superior status over all others?

They may say, "If we include Kannada in Delhi Metro, then we will have to include Bengali, Tamil, Malayalam,... It is not practical to do so." Agreed. That applies to Bengaluru Metro too. If we put Hindi in Bengaluru Metro, should we not put Bengali, Tamil, Telugu also? Why a special privilege to Hindi? State language and English is enough.

6. Why Should Hindis Receive Special Treatment Over and Above Telugus in Bengaluru?

There are more Telugus in Bengaluru than Hindis. There are more Tamils in Bengaluru than Hindis. If a third language is to be included in Bengaluru Metro, it should be Telugu, not Hindi.

Why a special privilege for Hindi? Is Hindi superior to all other Indian languages? Hindi politicians who control the Indian government because of their large numbers in parliament say that everyone should learn Hindi and Hindi should be everywhere. Are we in agreement that Hindi is superior to Telugu and bow to Hindi? I am not ready to do so.

7. Victory at Bengaluru Metro (Namma Metro)

Namma Metro (Our Metreo) is the local commuter system in Kannada speaking Karnataka's largest city Bengaluru. It is a Joint State-Centre Project receiving funds from both governments. It is operated by Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL). It adopted a three-language formula-Kannada, English and Hindi in signboards and announcements.

A pro-Kannada organization, Banavasi Balaga Prakashana, started an Internet campaign (twitter campaign) with the hashtag #NammaMetroHindiBeda (loosely translated "Our Metro, We don't want Hindi") in June 2017. Their twitter message got support from large numbers of people from Karnataka and other non-Hindi states.

Protests moved from the Internet to the "real world", with demonstrations organized by pro-Kannada organizations such as Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV). Maharashtra Navanirman Sena, Kerala Sangam, Bengaluru Tamil Sangha, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's (DMK) Karnataka unit, language equality group "Campaign for Language Equality And Rights" (CLEAR), and a few Kannada writers and politicians declared support for the protests.

Initially BMRCL said that including Hindi was its decision. Then, as protests intensified, BMRCL Managing Director Pradeep Singh Kharola said that he was following orders from the Indian Government.

As protests continued with no immediate end in site, BMRCL Managing Director told Kannada Development Authority (KDA) Chairman in late July 2017 that Hindi would be dropped from Bengaluru Namma Metro (Deccan Herald; July 26, 2017); all Hindi signs would removed and no more Hindi announcements. [Kannada Development Authority (KDA) is an autonomous body set up by Karnataka state government to protect the interest of Kannada language.]

Karnataka Chief Minister wrote to India's Urban Development Minister that using the three-language formula (Kannada, English and Hindi) in Bengaluru Metro is not reasonable.

We want to point out that state government acted only after protests mounted on the Internet and in the real world. Lesson is that it is up to the general population to take the initiative on protecting language and cultural rights; do not expect the state government to act without public protests and pressure, especially if the ruling party is one of the All-India Parties (Congress Party, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)).

We congratulate the people of Karnataka, in general, and all the organizations and individuals who participated in the protests in particular for their hard earned victory.

8. Keep Hindi out of Metros in all non-Hindi States Permanently

While we celebrate our victory, rightly so, we shall not forget that what one Metro Managing Director gives another Metro Managing Director can take away. That is, a year from now or five years from now, another Metro Director can order that Hindi be put back in metro signs and announcements.

Indian government's devious act of stepping back when protests against Hindi imposition intensifies, and reverting back to Hindi imposition after a few years is not new. Around 2004, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) started writing Hindi on national highways kilometre stones in Tamil Nadu. Public protests started. Chief Minister Jayalalithaa of All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) wrote to the prime minister and also issued some caustic statements. Under mounting criticism in Tamil Nadu, India's Minister for Shipping and Surface Transport T.R.Baalu issued a statement. Here is an excerpt from The Hindu newspaper, "Mr. Baalu, denying the Chief Minister's charge that Hindi words are being inscribed on milestones on national highways in Tamil Nadu, said that in November he had instructed the National Highways officials to write the names of towns and distance in kilometres in Tamil and English." (Hindu; December 22, 2004).

In spite of the Indian government minister Baalu's clear statement that names of towns on highway stones would be in Tamil and English, twelve years later in early 2017, English was removed and town names were written in Tamil and Hindi only (Hindustan Times; March 31, 2017). Protests arose in Tamil Nadu and some protesters painted black over Hindi names. "Sensing the simmering tension over the issue, National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) authorities issued instructions to erase the newly-included Hindi scripts. It was evident in Vellore city. The new Hindi markings on several milestones along the 533 km stretch, NH 75, between Bantval in Karnataka and Vellore in Tamil Nadu, have been erased and replaced with names of places in English" (Times of India; April 10, 2017).

As sure as sun will rise again tomorrow morning, Hindi signs will come again on national highways in a few years. The same is true with Hindi signs in Bengaluru Namma Metro also.

Only way to stop is for a law passed in parliament that language policy in joint state-centre projects would be made solely by the state government irrespective of how much central government fund was received. Is it possible to get such a law passed in the Indian parliament? I do not think so. So any minister or official can put back Hindi in metros and other joint state-centre projects.

We shall not stop the pressure on politicians until a suitable law is enacted in parliament.

9. Can Hindi Imposition-Imperialism be Stopped in India? A Test

I am of the opinion that Indian Constitution cannot be amended to give all languages equal status because it is numerically impossible to get the necessary two-thirds votes in parliament. There are enough Hindi members of parliament to block any amendment.

Yet some of my well-meaning friends say that we can amend the Indian constitution and end Hindi imposition. Let us make passing a law on state-centre projects our litmus test. Let us mobilize all our efforts to get such a law passed within three years. If we cannot pass such a language-equality law that requires only 50% votes in parliament, how can we expect to amend the constitution that requires two-thirds majority in parliament?

REFERENCE

1.
<http://web.archive.org/web/20160715145421/http://www.thenewsminute.com/article/unit-ed-states-south-india-can-southern-collective-get-us-better-deal-delhi-46501>

(First Published: August 2017)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

7. Telegraph Service in Hindi and English Only

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 14 also because of its relevance there.]

OUTLINE

1. Background
2. Indian Government, E-mails and Telegrams
3. How Hindi Ruled Supreme in Telegraph Services

1. Background

We are not talking here about the messenger service called "telegram" available on the Internet. We are discussing here the original telegram pre-dating Internet. Before e-mails became widely available, telegrams were the fastest way to send messages. Messages were sent through telegraph wires that networked around the world. In India, telegraph services were under the control of the Indian government like the Indian postal service. Every city and almost every town was wired and messages were sent instantly from on telegraph office to another, and then delivered to the recipient by a human messenger. Once e-mail became popular telegraph service became obsolete. So Indian government ended the telegraph services in 2013.

2. Indian Government, E-mails and Telegrams

This article discusses how the Indian government discriminated all Indian languages except Hindi in this vital communication tool in those days when telegraph was vital to businesses and individuals for sending urgent messages. In contrast, e-mails, successor to telegrams, is available in most Indian languages because e-mail is not under government control but privately offered and operated. Also look at social media like Facebook, Twitter and messenger. They are all privately operated and many Indian languages can be used. If these services were under Indian government control, you can be certain that Hindi would rule in these services and other languages would be sidelined. **When Indian government has a monopoly to a useful or vital service and no competitive private services are available, it will use it to impose Hindi by making the service available in Hindi and English only and ignoring all other languages.** Telegraph services is an example from the past. Now we discuss what happened during the days of telegraph services.

3. How Hindi Ruled Supreme in Telegraph Services

Telegraphs were brought to India during the British colonial rule. English was the only language in which telegrams could be sent in India during the British rule. After the British rule ended and the Hindi-dominated Indian government was formed in 1947,

Hindi was also soon added but other Indian languages were ignored. Telegrams could be sent in English or Hindi only in Tamil Nadu and everywhere in India. That put those who do not know English or Hindi at a disadvantage. After decades of requests and pleas from Tamil leaders, Indian government finally agreed to facilitate Tamil telegrams in some telegraph centres in Tamilnadu from January 14, 1994. (A special thanks goes to Congress leader Mr. *Kumari Anandan who relentlessly worked to introduce Tamil telegrams. It is seldom that Congress leaders from Tamilnadu do something for Tamil. Kumari Anandan is one of the few exceptions.)

Even then, **only a limited number telegraph centres**, mostly in major cities and towns, had Tamil telegraph facilities. This is unfortunate because it was the smaller towns closer to rural areas that needed Tamil telegraphs the most because not many knew English in these areas. People who do not know English and know only Tamil do send telegrams. May be not as many as those who know English but they do send telegrams and those telegrams are sometimes very important to them. Once in our village a villager who knows only Tamil received a telegram in English. I had the unfortunate task of translating the telegram to this elderly gentleman. The telegram told of the untimely death of his son in an accident in the town he was working. His daughter-in-law might have asked someone to write the English telegram. I know many instances where the death of a father or mother in the village was telegraphed to the children in far away cities.

In 2005, Indian government closed down Tamil telegraph facilities in all or most of the telegraph centers in Tamil Nadu (while Hindi and English telegrams could be sent from any telegraph center in Tamilnadu). The Indian government stated that it was doing so because not many people are sending Tamil telegrams.

A few question beg to be asked. If the number of telegrams sent in Tamil is the criterion, how many telegrams are sent in Hindi from Tamil Nadu (other than those sent by Indian Government offices which are forced to send certain percentage of communications in Hindi)? If that number is small, why are Hindi telegraphic facilities in Tamil Nadu still operating in every telegraphic center in Tamil Nadu? Use the same yardstick used to shut down Tamil telegraphic facilities. We also want to point out that lack of Tamil telegrams inconveniences at least some people in Tamil Nadu who know only Tamil. There is no need for Hindi telegrams because those Hindi speakers living in Tamil Nadu know either English or Tamil. If not, they should. Why should a Hindi speaker from over a thousand miles be able to send Hindi telegrams from Tamil Nadu, even though a Tamil speaker cannot send a Tamil telegram from his own native Tamil Nadu?

A German can send a German telegram in Germany. A Thai can send a Thai telegram in Thailand. An Armenian can send an Armenian telegram in Armenia. A Tamil should be able to send a Tamil telegram in Tamil Nadu. [We are discussing what happened before privately operated e-mail services replaced Indian government operated telegraph services in 2013. How Indian government discriminated all non-Hindi languages in telegraph services should not be forgotten.]

(First Published: August 2006; Updated February 2018)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

8. **Hindi on Chennai Television**

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 14 also because of its relevance there.]

[Though we discuss Hindi in the Regional Channels in Chennai (Tamil Nadu), situation is the same in other non-Hindi regions too. This is yet another way of thrusting Hindi into non-Hindi regions.]

OUTLINE

1. Unpleasant Surprises
2. Arrogance of Hindi Power
3. Cable Television and Direct-to-Home Television
4. Concluding Remarks

1. Unpleasant Surprises

Television viewers in Chennai and vicinity had a rude surprise in late 2003. When they turned on their television sets to the Indian-Government operated Chennai regional Doordarshan channel (DD1) at 8:30 PM for the day's news in Tamil, there was someone reading the news in Hindi. Lo and behold the Hindi dominated Indian Government had decided that Hindi news should be broadcast at the choice hour of 8:30 PM and Tamil news should be moved to a later time in the night when many people have already gone to sleep. This makes no sense since this regional channel is seen only in Tamil Nadu where almost everyone knows Tamil and very few know Hindi. This is yet another testimony as to who rules India. It is Hindi politicians who are determined to thrust Hindi on non-Hindi peoples.

Chennai television viewers had yet another unpleasant surprise. When they turned on their Chennai regional channel (DD1) on Friday night to watch a Tamil movie and relax, there was a Hindi movie, although Tamil movie broadcasts are huge hits (popular) in Tamilnadu. Vast majority of viewers could not understand Hindi. Disappointed viewers hoped that they could catch a Tamil movie at least the next day (Saturday). After dinner they turn on to the regional channel (DD1) for the usual Tamil movie broadcast. To their utter dismay there was a Hindi movie again. What happened? Hindi dominated Indian Government had instructed the regional television center in Chennai to replace the Friday night and Saturday night Tamil movies with Hindi movies, leaving only Sunday nights for Tamil movies.

2. Arrogance of Hindi Power

Remember, in addition to the few regional channels, there are over a dozen Indian-Government operated national channels (national broadcasts) seen all over India that are

exclusively for Hindi or Hindi and English programmes. When regional channels were introduced (which could be seen in major cities and nearby areas only), people thought that at least in these channels local languages would dominate the programs. That was not to be. Hindi politicians made sure that Hindi programmes were also included in substantial numbers in these channels. We do not see the logic of why Hindi programmes should be included in a regional channel in Chennai which serves Tamil speakers, when there are already over a dozen national channels available in Tamil Nadu which show Hindi programs day and night, seven days a week (National channels do not have Tamil programs). This is nothing but arrogance and display of power by Hindi politicians to demonstrate it is THEIR country and Hindi will dominate in everything the Indian Government does.

One more point. Take a village in West Bengal (India) near the border of Bangladesh. If they turn on their television sets to Indian-Government operated television channels, they would not find anything in their mother tongue Bengali. However if they turn on to Bangladesh television they could watch a whole array of programs in Bengali.

3. Cable Television and Direct-to-Home Television

There are people who say that Tamil Nadu has Tamil programs in cable television channels; so why are you complaining about lack of Tamil programs on broadcast television (over-the-air television)? Cable channels cost money (monthly fees). Poorer segments of the population cannot afford the monthly cable fees. Also, cable television channels are not available in many rural areas. While Hindi speakers can get at least a dozen free Hindi programs (movies, sports, news, educational) any time of the day anywhere in India (even in remote areas), even outside the Hindi speaking states FOR FREE, why should Tamil people have to pay for cable television to watch Tamil programs in Tamil Nadu? Indian-Government operated television (Doordarshan) is subsidized by Tamil people's tax monies too.

Direct-to-Home (DTH) television through satellites will be available in India starting from 2004 or 2005. A few Tamil channels and Hindi channels will be available in Tamil Nadu through DTH. Though it does require a monthly fee, one has to buy the necessary satellite dish. Again, Tamil Nadu will receive far more Hindi programs than Tamil programs through DTH. Why? What is the reason?

4. Concluding Remarks

Our position is that there should be a variety of Tamil programs (movies, sports, news, educational) available in Tamil Nadu for FREE from Indian-Government operated television broadcasting. When we see that a Hindi speaker living in Tamil Nadu has substantially more choice of Hindi programs than Tamil; that is Hindi imperialism. **If India is for everyone living in India, then Indian Government funded projects should benefit everyone equally and should not disproportionately favor on group (here, Hindi speakers).** This is not the case in India and we have presented dozens of examples in the various chapters of this book.

NOTE: If sufficient pressure is brought on the Indian Government, it may relent and add a few more programs in Tamil in the regional channel. But when things cool down, it will start replacing Tamil programs by Hindi programs again. We have precedent to it. In the mid-1980s, Indian Government replaced the Tamil news by Hindi news at night and moved the Tamil news to a later time in the Chennai regional channel. The then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran phoned the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and told him that it was not acceptable and there would be grave consequences. His AIADMK party and other groups talked of an anti-Hindi agitation (AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam). Consequently Tamil news was put back in its original time slot. Then some years after Chief Minister Ramachandran's death, Indian Government again replaced the Tamil news by Hindi news and moved Tamil news to a later time. Number of hours of Hindi programs was also increased as if in retaliation. **That is the Indian Government tactic; back off and hit back later**, not only with respect to Hindi on television, but also on other discriminatory practices favoring Hindi speakers. So be ever vigilant!

(First Published: November 2004)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

9.

Hindi in Television: A Comparison of Bangladesh and West Bengal (India)

K. Roy

[For those who are not familiar with South Asia: Bangladesh is an independent country bordering India in the northeast. West Bengal is a state within India bordering Bangladesh. Native language of both Bangladesh and West Bengal is Bengali.]

Politicians in Bangladesh complained that television broadcast of a Japanese cartoon program "Doraemon" dubbed into Hindi was adversely affecting children learning their mother tongue Bengali; they advocated that foreign cartoons should be translated into Bengali. Bangladesh government banned the Hindi-dubbed cartoon in February 2013.

I am from the State of West Bengal in India. I very well understand and empathize with the situation. Children, in their early years, should be exposed to television programs in their mother tongue. Once children have achieved sufficient competency in their mother tongue, they may be introduced to foreign language programmes. Even then there should be Bengali programmes available to that age group of children to tone their mother-language skills.

Private television broadcasters in Bangladesh find it cheaper to just broadcast Hindi-dubbed cartoons than have them dubbed into Bengali. They only care about making money and do not care about the impact on Bengali children and the future of their mother tongue. That is why Bangladesh government stepped in and banned the Hindi-dubbed cartoon.

In the Indian State of West Bengal, where I live, the situation is different but the onslaught of Hindi programmes prevails. Here the dynamics is different. The free Indian broadcast television (TV) is in the hands of Indian government that is dominated by Hindi politicians. Although India is rich with so many wonderful languages, the Hindi politicians who dominate Indian government policy-making push aside other Indian languages and propagate Hindi through television. Indian government operated Doordharsan broadcasts in non-Hindi states more programmes in Hindi than in the state language.

Hindi onslaught into Bangladesh television was checkmated by the Bangladesh government. Unfortunately the state governments in India have no say on the Indian broadcast television (Doordarshan); it is totally under the purview of the Indian government. Fortunately my mother tongue Bengali will be protected on television and other social-business-government affairs by the sovereign government of Bangladesh. There are no sovereign governments to protect the Indian languages, except for Hindi that has protection and nourishment from the Indian government. So many great Indian languages like Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, etc. would, in the long run, become

secondary, useless languages cast out from business and government affairs. Indian government is actively trying to make them useless secondary languages.

Indian Government's goal in making non-Hindi Indian languages as useless secondary languages is clear from this incidence. A Parliamentary Sub-Committee Meeting was held in Mysore (Karnataka State) on July 5, 2008 to review the “implementation” of Hindi as per the official language policy. There was a large board written in Kannada. It says, "Maneya Vyavahara Kannadadalli, Karyalayada Vyavahara Raajabhasheyalli". It means, "Use Kannada at home, use Rajabhasha in office". They are referring to Hindi as the Rajabhasha of India.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Indian broadcast television (Doordarshan) is free while cable-cast and satellite-cast television are available for a fee only. While Hindi dominates the free Doordharshan, privately operated cable and satellite-cast television channels do show large numbers of non-Hindi programs, but for a fee.)

(First Published: July 2013)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

10. No Sari, No Idli: South Indians Go to Hell!

Sharada T.P.K.

[Not only Hindi language is imposed on non-Hindi Indians, Indian government also sidelines/ignores non-Hindi cultures and thrusts non-Hindi cultures on non-Hindi peoples.]

OUTLINE

1. Indian Airlines Eliminates Saris from its Dress Code
2. Indian Railways Eliminates Idli-Dosai from its Menu
3. Additional Information
4. Related Information
5. Feedback

1. Indian Airlines Eliminates Saris from its Dress Code

In September 2006 Indian Government owned Indian Airlines Chairman Vishvapathi Tripathi announced that all airline hostesses would be asked to wear suridar-salwar instead of sarees. (Although women all over India wear sarees and surida-salwar nowadays, suridar-salwar is traditionally worn in northern India while sarees are south Indian tradition). Then, after some disgruntlement from southern politicians, Indian Airlines quietly backed off in May 2007 saying that it is just going to change the colour of the saris from green to orange and blue. Had south Indians not been alert and raised their voice against it, saris would have gone out from Indian Airlines. [Note: Recently Indian Airlines and Air India merged together and is called Air India. Saris will continue to be used.]

2. Indian Railways Eliminates Idli-Dosai from its Menu

In early 2007 Indian Government owned Indian Railways eliminated almost all south Indian dishes from the food served to passengers (even to passengers traveling within southern states). Even the popular idli and dosai were gone. This resulted in much grunting and complaints from the south. Indian Railways and its caterer Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) issued a statement in April 2007 that it was only trying out the new menu on a trial basis for a few months and south Indian food would be back soon. Why was it eliminating popular southern foods from the menu on a trial basis while north Indian poori, paratha and other foods are still there? Why was it trying out removing south Indian dishes?

Actually the initial notice to regional managers did not say the removal was temporary. It said that the menu is overhauled to make it passenger friendly. Removing south Indian food may be "passenger friendly" to north Indian passengers, but definitely not to

southern passengers. May be "passengers" mean "north Indian passengers" to Indian Railways and its caterer Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)?

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Idli and dosai are two popular dishes in south India. Idli is a steamed rice and lentil cake; often served with spicy sides like chutney, sambar or chili powder-oil. Dosai is a rice and lentil dough crepe; often served with spicy sides like chutney or sambar. Sometimes it is stuffed with spiced potato or onion. Non-Tamils often spell and pronounce dosai as dosa. The correct Tamil pronunciation and spelling are thosai.]

3. Additional Information

(added in October 2012)

Huffington Post is a popular news website in America. It published the Top-Ten Dishes from around the world ("ten foods to try before you die") in 2012. Included in that list is South India's masala dosai. This is the only dish from the Indian Subcontinent in that list. It is this world-acclaimed masala dosai that the Indian Railways removed from its catering in 2007 (brought back after protest). It is not the taste or popularity of dish but whether it is from north India seem to be the criteria for the north-centered Indian government. South seems to get the short end of the stick in everything from language to cultural programs and movies on TV, to dishes served on trains.

4. Related Information

(added in January 2016)

Indian railways, operated by the Indian government, created a website www.coms.indianrailways.gov.in where people can file complaints; you can file complaints in English or Hindi only (visited the website in March 2015). So if my uncle, who does not know English or Hindi, will not be able to file a complaint if necessary.

5. FEEDBACK

(added by Thanjai Nalankill in July 2007)

The events Ms. Sharada cites clearly show Indian Government attempts to remove south Indian cultural identities from everything it controls. It is a concerted, steady process, which in a couple of hundred years would totally eliminate non-Hindi cultural identities from India, and Hindi-fy entire India.

I also want to make another point here. Some Indian apologists may say, "Once south Indians protested, sari and idli-dosai have been brought back. So what is the problem?" The problem is this. **Why are south Indians at the receiving end all the time when it comes to the Indian government?** We thought Indian government represents all the peoples of this "Indian Union". South Indian food, dress, language and other cultural identities are systematically sidelined. Watched Indian government owned Doordharshan Television recently? How many programs are in Hindi and how many in other Indian languages? Why are south Indian festivals and other cultural events virtually blacked out in Doordharshan?

Why should south Indians have to be ever vigilant to make sure that southern icons like sari, idli and dosai are not eliminated? Why is Indian government keen on eliminating southern cultural symbols from everything it operates? Are South Indians Indian citizens or not?

(First Published: July 2007; Updated: January 2016)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

11. **Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat or Hindi-fy India Programme?**

Thanjai Nalankilli

[Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat is yet another "wolf in sheep's clothing" project for the Hindification of India.]

OUTLINE

1. A New Hindification Project
2. Duplicity of the Three-Languages Formula
3. More Examples of Hindification of India
 - 3.1 *Indian Government Employees in Non-Hindi States*
 - 3.2 *Change the "One Day, One Hindi Word" Programme to "One Day, One Kannada Word", etc.*
 - 3.3 *Observe State Language Week instead of Hindi Week at Indian Government Offices*
 - 3.4 *Make Air India Announcements and Provide Menus, Movies in Local Languages*
 - 3.5 *Allow all Indian Languages in Parliament (without Restrictions)*
 - 3.6 *Food Diversity in Indian Railways*
 - 3.7 *Use School Textbooks to Promote Diversity*
 - 3.8 *Use Television for Inter-Cultural Exchanges*
4. Concluding Remarks

1. A New Hindification Project

President of India, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, in his address to both houses of parliament in January 2017, said "Celebrating the cultural diversity along with the richness of language and heritage of every state, my government has started the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat programme. The uniqueness of this programme is to pair and entwine two different states with diverse cultures for over a year so that each state can assimilate the cultural spirit of the other". (President's Secretariat; January 31, 2017)

I do not know what "Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat" means because it is either Hindi or Sanskrit, the favoured languages of the rulers of India. But based on what the president said, it seems to be yet another programme to infuse Hindi into non-Hindi states of India. This is not a cultural diversity program but a program to establish a uniform culture, the Hindi/Sanskrit culture, all over India--slowly killing off the independent identities of the various regions.

From our experience with Indian government's past programmes and projects, we know that, as part of this programme, Hindi culture would be infused into non-Hindi states but very little would be done to spread the other cultures into Hindi states. Here is an example.

2. Duplicity of the Three-Languages Formula

Indian government introduced the "three-language formula" in education (in schools); this formula requires that all non-Hindi states teach Hindi as a subject in their schools and Hindi states teach a non-Hindi Indian language in their schools. Except for a few states (for example Tamil Nadu) that refused to accept the three languages formula, all other states taught Hindi in their schools. Hindi states taught mostly Sanskrit or some related language in a lukewarm fashion paying lip service to the three languages formula. Proof of the pudding is in its taste. Millions students in non-Hindi states achieved a reasonable degree of proficiency in Hindi. Can you show in each Hindi state just 1000 students who have the same level of proficiency in one of the South Indian or East Indian languages? You cannot. The three-language formula was just a vehicle to thrust Hindi into non-Hindi states. Same is the case with this Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme. It is just another vehicle to Hindi-fy all of India.

3. More Examples of Hindification of India

3.1 Indian Government Employees in Non-Hindi States

Make it mandatory for all Indian government employees (including Indian government bank and railway employees) to learn the state official language and pass a state government administered language proficiency test within one year of employment in the state. That not only educates out-of-state employees in state language and culture, it also removes the difficulty/burden of local people having to deal with out-of-state employees who do not know the state language.

3.2 Change the "One Day, One Hindi Word" Programme to "One Day, One Kannada Word", etc.

Many Indian government offices have a board at the front entrance with a Hindi word and its English translation written everyday. If the Indian government is really for diversity, instead of "One Day, One Hindi Word" ("A Hindi Word A Day"), display a local language word everyday (Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Tamil, Telugu, etc.). As we said before, many out-of-state employees do not know the state language and this would help.

3.3 Observe State Language Week instead of Hindi Week at Indian Government Offices

Indian government offices are required to observe "Hindi Week" every year. Hindi essay, poetry and elocution competitions are held for non-Hindi employees. If the Indian government is really for diversity, hold "State Language Week" instead of Hindi Week to encourage out-of-state employees to learn the language of the land.

3.4 Make Air India Announcements and Provide Menus, Movies in Local Languages

Announcements in Air India flights within a state (for example, between two Tamil Nadu cities Madurai and Chennai) are in English and Hindi only. Make the announcements in

the state language. That is diversity. What the Indian government is doing in Hindi-fication of India.

Some foreign airlines print airline menus and show movies in the language of the Indian city it is playing. Do the same in Air India. Why Hindi/English menus and movies only? Non-Hindi people fly too.

3.5 Allow all Indian Languages in Parliament (without Restrictions)

Currently (as of 2017) Members of Parliament (MPs) can speak in Hindi or English anytime they want. They may speak in any other Indian language if they give the text of the speech to the speaker in advance; they may ask secondary/supplementary questions in Hindi or English only. Ministers are not allowed to talk in any language other than Hindi or English.

Reason given for this discriminatory language restriction is that while parliament has several full time Hindi-English-Hindi translators, it has only part-time translators for other languages. Solution is simple. Instead of spending money on Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat, spend a fraction of that money to hire full time translators. That is language diversity.

Members of European Union Parliament (EUP) can speak in two dozen languages without any prior notice. That is diversity. Learn what language diversity and equality means from EUP.

3.6 Food Diversity in Indian Railways

In 2007, Southern Railways that serves most of Southern India removed idli, dosai and sambar from its menu but continued to serve north Indian foods like poori, dal, etc. (The Hindu; April 27, 2007) Idli, dosai and sambar are uniquely South Indian foods. Is this Indian government's idea of cultural diversity? Idli, dosai and sambar were put back in the railway menu after many complaints. Why were South Indian foods removed in the first place while keeping North Indian foods in Southern Railways?

3.7 Use School Textbooks to Promote Diversity

"Government of India should give South India its rightful and legitimate share in history books", Twenty Ninth All-India Conference of Dravidian Linguistics (February 2002). Things have not changed in the past 15 years since 2002. History books used at CBSE schools and central schools continue to be centered on the Hindi belt region, ignoring the South and the East. Instead of teaching a Hindi-centric history of India, expose students to the past of all regions of India. Teach them the cultural diversity of India; cultural diversity would become a fact of life in the next generation. There is no need for Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat, use school textbooks to expose people to the diverse cultures, traditions and history of India. (NOTE: CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education)

schools and central schools come under the purview of the Indian government while state board schools come under state governments.)

3.8 Use Television for Inter-Cultural Exchanges

Television (TV) is one of the best tools to promote cultural exchange. Indian government has at its disposal the extensive broadcast TV network, the Doordarshan. Instead of using this free broadcast network to promote inter-cultural exchange, India is using it to thrust Hindi into non-Hindi areas and Hindi-fy India. In its many national network channels seen all over India, how many Hindi movies are broadcast and how many non-Hindi movies?

If Doordarshan is to broadcast movies on the basis of population ratio, for every 41 Hindi movies, 7 Telugu movies should be broadcast (similarly for other non-Hindi languages also). Right now Doordarshan is not broadcasting even one Telugu movie for every 400 Hindi movies.

If people who cannot understand Hindi movies have to put up with Hindi movies in their TV, let the Hindi people also put up with non-Hindi movies in their TV. Maybe they will understand a little of other cultures, history, customs and music. Use the national broadcasts for promoting diversity. There is no need for Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, use Doordarshan to expose people to other Indian cultures.

There are many more examples we can provide of Indian government Hindi-fying non-Hindi states, quietly and systematically, attempting to destroy local cultures. But the above examples are enough to show Indian government's duplicity in talking of cultural diversity and taking actions to establish a single pan-India culture, the culture of the Hindi region. Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme is yet another means to spend taxpayer monies to establish a single pan-India culture. Non-Hindi politicians and people should oppose it.

4. Concluding Remarks

We do not need yet another Hindi-fication programme called Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. We have enough such programmes already--Indian government offices, Indian Railways, Air India, CBSE and central schools and Doordarshan. Diversify them first, opening them to all Indian languages and cultures. Then we will consider "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat". We do not want to fund yet another "Hindi-fy India" programme.

Non-Hindi politicians and people may oppose this "Hindi-fy India" programme called "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" but their protests will fall into the deaf ears of Hindi politicians. They have the numbers in parliament to block any amendment to the Indian constitutions to stop the Hindi-fy India projects. Sooner or later, it may take a hundreds years, the diverse Indian cultures would be weakened and side-lined and a pan-India culture, namely the Hindi culture, would emerge destroying the many millennia old cultures of South Asia. Only way out of this situation is for non-Hindi states to get out of

the Indian Union and form their own union or unions, independent of Indian government and Indian constitution. All non-Hindi states may become a single country (New India?) or multiple regional countries (South India, East India, West India) or multiple independent countries. The choice should be left to each state. People should decide their own future without any dictate from the Hindi masters in Delhi.

(First Published: March 2017)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

12.

Indirect Hindi Imposition Through Hindi Project Names

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 11 also because of its relevance there.]

OUTLINE

1. Introduction and Examples
2. Is This Unconstitutional and Illegal?

1. Introduction and Examples

Indian government uses every possible method to thrust Hindi into unwilling non-Hindi throats. One such method is to give Hindi names to Indian government projects funded by both Hindi and non-Hindi taxpayers. I have listed 47 such names. This is not a complete list.

We have no problem if these names are used in Hindi reports or announcements. Indian government uses these Hindi names in English documents as well as documents in other languages like Tamil, Bengali, etc. I do not understand the meaning of any of them. You need to know Hindi to understand them. These projects are funded by our tax monies but we do not understand what they are. Is this India or Hindia?

1. Aawas Yojana
2. Akshaya Pathra
3. Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham
4. Antyodaya Anna Yojana
5. Atal Grameen Griha Yojana
6. Ayushman Bharat
7. Bal Swatchhata
8. Bharat Nirman
9. Bharat Sevak Samaj
10. Bharatmala Pariyojana
11. Bhartiya Shisha Kosh
12. Bhavishya Nidhi Adalat
13. Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana
14. Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat
15. Fasal Beema Yojna
16. Grameen Shakti
17. Indira Awaas Yojana
18. Kasturiba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
19. Kaushal Vikas Yojana
20. Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana
21. Krishi Sinchayee Yojana

22. Mudra Yojana
23. Niramaya Swasthya Bima Yojana
24. Nirmal Gram Puraskar
25. Panchayat Yuva Shakthi Abhiyan
26. Poshan Abhiyaan Swasth Bharat Preraks
27. Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana
28. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
29. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana
30. Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana
31. Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana
32. Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana
33. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
34. Rashtriya Sama Vikas Yojana
35. Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana
36. Rozgar Yojana
37. Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana
38. Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana
39. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
40. Sashastra Seema Bal
41. Seva Bhoj Yojna
42. Swachhta Pakhwada
43. Swarna Jayanti
44. Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana
45. Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik
46. Ujjwala Yojana
47. Vidya Vahini

2. Is This Unconstitutional and Illegal?

I am not a lawyer but I wonder if this practice of naming projects in Hindi and using those Hindi names in English documents violates the constitution and language acts? The purpose of English documents is to communicate with peoples, businesses and state governments who do not know Hindi. Those who do not know Hindi cannot understand these project names and thus it seems like a violation of the Indian constitution. I hope that some lawyers would look into it, and if necessary file a lawsuit. State governments may also act to stop this cunning backdoor Hindi imposition. We should contact our elected representatives to protect our rights.

My suggestion is that Hindi names should be used in Hindi documents (with English names in parentheses), English names in English documents (with Hindi names in parentheses), Bengali names in Bengali documents (with English and Hindi names in parentheses), etc.

(First Published: February 2019)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

13. Why Hindi People Insist on and Tamil People Oppose Hindi Signs in Tamil Nadu?

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 14 also because of its relevance there.]

[Although this article concentrates on Tamil Nadu, the general discussion on opposition to Hindi signs is valid to all non-Hindi states.]

OUTLINE

Abbreviations

1. Introduction
2. Reasons in a Nutshell
3. There is no Practical Need for Hindi Signs in Tamil Nadu
4. Hindi Signs are the Emblems of Hindi Supremacy, Domination and Hegemony Over Tamil Nadu
5. Hindi Signs are the Most Visible Symbols of Hindi Imposition on Tamil People
6. Update: Opposition in Karnataka

ABBREVIATIONS

AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

DK - AIADMK - Dravidar Kazagam

DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

PMK - Paattaali Makkal Katchi

1. Introduction

Tamil people opposed Hindi signs at Indian (Central) Government offices in Tamil Nadu from the very beginning. Indian Government ordered the painting of Hindi signs, in addition to the existing English and Tamil signs, in all Indian Government offices and facilities in Tamil Nadu in 1952. Dravidar Kazhagam (DK) and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) spearheaded the opposition and carried out a "tarring campaign". DK President E. V. Ramaswamy Periyar (EVR) and DK volunteers tarred Hindi signs in Thiruchi (Trichi) on August 1, 1952. DMK General-Secretary C. N. Annadurai and DMK volunteers tarred Hindi signs in Coimbatore. Soon the Indian Government repainted the Hindi signs. There was no use in tarring them again and again. Signs would be repainted. Although Hindi signs were not tarred again and again, opposition to Hindi signs remains. More recently, in December 2004, Tamilnadu Chief Minister and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam(AIADMK) General-Secretary Jayalalthaa wrote a letter to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh asking him to remove the newly painted Hindi signs along national highways. Thank you Chief Minister Jayalalithaa.

More than once my Hindi friends had asked me, "Why do 'you people' (referring to Tamil people) oppose Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu?" The rest of this article is an elaboration of my answer to those friends.

2. Reasons in a Nutshell

There are three principal reasons:

- a) There is no practical need for Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu.
- b) Hindi signs are the emblems of Hindi supremacy, domination and hegemony over Tamil Nadu.
- c) Hindi signs are the most visible symbols of Hindi imposition on Tamil people. By opposing Hindi signs we are opposing the complete system of Hindi imposition that is doing great harm to Tamil people. "If Hindi were to become the official language of India, Hindi-speaking people will govern us. We will be treated like third rate citizens" - Former Tamilnadu Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai, speaking at a Public Meeting in Chennai Marina (Madras Marina) on April 29, 1963.

Let me elaborate on these points.

3. There is no practical need for Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu

Hindi politicians and people insist that Hindi is known to more people in India than any other language and so Hindi signs should be everywhere in the Indian Union. People whose mother tongue is Hindi or one of its dialects is about 40% of Indian population. Many people in the north, even those whose mother tongue is Gujarati, Punjabi, Rajasthani or Bihari usually have a working knowledge of Hindi. That does not mean that there should be Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu.

Is there a real benefit to putting Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu post offices, railway stations, national highways and Indian Government offices and undertakings (other than the pride and ego boost for Hindi people)? No benefit at all. Almost all Hindi belt people visiting Tamil Nadu know enough English at least to read English signs because English is taught in every school in India. These visitors need not have to know how to read, write or speak English sentences. All they need to know is English alphabet and how to read names written in English at railway stations or national highways. If the schools in Hindi states are so bad that people coming out with a fifth grade education cannot read names written in English, may be the state governments there should improve their schools at their own expense instead of painting Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu. Some proponents of Hindi may argue that there are people who never went up to the fifth grade. I seriously doubt that some Hindi person who never went up to the fifth grade would travel a thousand miles to see Tamil Nadu without someone who has at least that level of education accompanying him. I suggest that they do not. Tamil Nadu cannot cater to

every illiterate who visits Tamil Nadu. What about a Telugu person who cannot read English or Tamil visiting Tamil Nadu? Are we going to put Telugu signs all over Tamilnadu? What about a Bengali, and so on. What about a Tamil person who cannot read English or Hindi visiting the holy city of Benares in Hindi area or visiting the beautiful Agra in Hindi area? I have not seen any Tamil signs there. Why should Hindi people get a special superior status over others? Is everyone other than Hindi speakers second-class citizens of India? Is it India or Hindia?

[In a lighter vein, what about a Hindi person who is totally illiterate? (Cannot even read or write the mother tongue Hindi). There are many such people in the Hindi-belt because Hindi-belt states have a much lower literacy rate than most non-Hindi states. What about those people if they want to visit Tamil Nadu? Is the Indian Government going to employ people to stand near kilometer stones along national highways and at the entrance of railway stations to shout the name? This is said in light vein to show the impossibility of satisfying everybody's need. The people who visit Tamil Nadu, be they from nearby Kerala or far to the north Uttar Pradesh or far away Japan, have the responsibility to know enough Tamil or English to pass through Tamilnadu.]

4. Hindi Signs are the Emblems of Hindi Supremacy, Domination and Hegemony over Tamil Nadu

Hindi signs are the emblems of the domination and hegemony of Hindi people over Tamil Nadu. When Government of India ordered that Hindi signs be added at all its offices (including railway stations and post offices) in non-Hindi states, there already were English signs there (in addition to the local state language). Tamil and English signs are sufficient to serve all those who live in Tamil Nadu and visit Tamilnadu. Let me explain. Tamil signs for those who live in Tamil Nadu; it is the language of day-to-day living in Tamil Nadu (in the same way Bengali is in West Bengal, etc.) English signs for the benefit of those visiting us. We cannot post signs in the language of everyone who visit us. It is impractical to post signs in hundreds of languages. English has evolved as the international language (the language of communication and commerce between countries). English is taught in every country. We know that almost all who have a need to come to Tamilnadu (with the exception of those living just miles across the borders of Tamil Nadu in the neighboring states) know enough English to read signboards in English. By rare chance if someone who has not even that minimum level of English knowledge or Tamil were to come to Tamil Nadu for business or sightseeing or pilgrimage, it is his/her responsibility to come with a travelers dictionary, electronic translator or with someone who knows a minimum level of English or Tamil. No one expects to find signs in Tamil Nadu in Chinese, in German, in Vietnamese, in Nepalese, in Telugu or in Bengali ... Then why a special superior privilege for Hindi people?

Hindi politicians believe that they rule all of Indian Union and so there should be Hindi signs everywhere. When the Portuguese ruled Goa they put Portuguese signs all over Goa. When the French ruled Pondicherry they put French signs everywhere there. When the British ruled India they put English signs all over. (We put English signs now even after the end of British rule because it is NECESSARY for the benefit of those who

visit us, as discussed above.) Hindi people insist on Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu because they consider it part of their dominion. There is no practical reason for Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu.

Let me put it another way. For over a century, until the mid twentieth century, British, French and Portuguese ruled the Indian subcontinent. British ruled much of India. Signs in their language, English, were everywhere in British India. French ruled a small area including Pondicherry; there French signs were everywhere. Portuguese ruled Goa; there Portuguese signs were everywhere. British rule ended and Hindi dominated Indian rule came over the British India (except for Pakistan) in 1947. Within five years Hindi signs were placed throughout this area thus indicating Hindi hegemony over these areas. French rule ended in Pondicherry in 1954 and Pondicherry became part of India. Soon French signs were replaced by Hindi signs (there were no Hindi signs before). Then Portuguese rule over Goa ended in the 1961 and Goa became part of India. Soon Portuguese signs were replaced by Hindi signs. As we discussed before, there is no practical need for Hindi signs. **In essence they are painted as the emblem of Hindi domination over all of Indian Union.**

In a way it is like a dog lifting its leg and urinating on every kilometer stone or post it sees on its way to mark its territory. Nothing more. (Don't write me saying that I compared Hindi people to dogs. No, I did not. I am merely comparing the acting painting Hindi signs unnecessarily along national highways to the act of dogs urinating on posts and kilometer stones on its way.) Hindi people are merely marking their territory by putting Hindi signs all over their dominion.

Nowhere is it clearer than if you drive from West Bengal to the neighboring Bangladesh. Vast majority of people of West Bengal and Bangladesh are of the same race (ethnicity) and they both have the same mother tongue, Bengali. But West Bengal is a state of India and Bangladesh is an independent country. As you drive through West Bengal towards Bangladesh, you will see Hindi signs (along with Bengali and English) on the national highway but once you cross the border and enter Bangladesh you will not see any Hindi signs. Is there a real need for Hindi signs in West Bengal? Hindi business people visiting Bangladesh do not insist that they put Hindi signs in post offices, airports and railway stations but they insist that there be Hindi signs everywhere in West Bengal, even in remote village post offices. Hindi signs are foremost the emblems of Hindi rule over all of Indian Union.

I will give one more example. Large numbers of Indian tourists go to Sri Lanka, mostly to southern Sinhala areas. Indian government and private companies also do substantial business in Sri Lanka; the two countries are even discussing a type of free trade agreement to increase business further. So, many Indian business people visit Sri Lankan cities. Do Hindi tourists and business people insist that the Sri Lankan Government put Hindi signs on roads, railway stations and post offices? No. Because Sri Lanka is not under the control of the Indian Government dominated by Hindi-belt politicians.

5. Hindi Signs are the most Visible Symbols of Hindi Imposition on Tamil People

Hindi signs are the most visible symbols of the more serious and discriminatory Hindi imposition practices by the Indian Government over the Tamil and other non-Hindi peoples. By opposing the placement of Hindi signs, we are opposing the whole system of Hindi imposition.

Hindi signs are like a small odd shaped mole growing on your back. It does not hurt. But it might be the visible symptom of skin cancer. Unless it is removed and treated, the cancer could spread, cause suffering and kill you. Hindi signs are like a lump in a woman's breast. It does not hurt but if it is not removed and treated, it would grow and cause great suffering and kill you.

Hindi signs painted along national highways, railway stations, post offices and central government offices in Tamil Nadu are the **most visible symptoms** of the deep-rooted, systematic Hindi imposition that is slowly but steadily hurting the Tamil people. Most Tamil people do not know how Hindi is forcibly pushed down the throat of many hard working Tamil people day after day on non-Hindi Indian government employees [Volume 5: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5]. Many Tamil people do not know how making Hindi the official language of India has reduced job opportunities for Tamil people in the Indian Government [Volume 5: Chapters 13, 15]. Good Tamil students lose out to Hindi-belt students of lower caliber in Indian government job examinations because Hindi students could write the examinations in their mother tongue while Tamil students have to write in either Hindi or English. Statistic from Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra where Hindi is a compulsory subject in schools shows that **studying Hindi in schools does not change this situation** because students from these states did not fare any better than Tamil students [Volume 5: Chapter 15; Volume 1: Chapter 2]. However much you study Hindi you cannot compete with Hindi students on equal footing because Hindi is their mother tongue. While most Tamil people do not know of these hidden Hindi-imposition practices and their negative consequences, all Tamil people see the Hindi signs in their daily life. By tarring these signs (as Periyar and Annadurai did in 1952) or loudly opposing these signs (as Chief Minister Jeyalalithaa and PMK leader Ramadoss did in 2004), we are bringing the complete system of Hindi imposition to people's attention. That is the primary reason for opposing Hindi signs. We should tell the people of the hidden and more dangerous Hindi imposition practices too.

Targeting a more visible symbol of oppression, imperialism or domination for protest as symbolic of the opposition to the complete system of oppression is not new. During the American revolution against British rule, American patriots boarded a ship bringing tea to America and through the tea into the sea to protest Britain's discriminatory taxation policies in America. Tea was not the only item taxed. There were more expensive items that were being taxed. But the American patriots chose tea for their symbolic protest because large numbers of Americans drank tea on a daily basis and were annoyed at the taxes imposed on tea. It is this symbolic protest that started the war of independence that ended with American independence.

Gandhi's "salt protest" during India's independence movement to end British rule was also a symbolic protest. Salt was chosen because everyone uses salt every day. Purpose of that protest was not just to end the taxes on salt. The salt protest was a symbolic act of defiance of British rule and part of the overall independence struggle.

Our opposition to Hindi signs is also symbolic and it reflects our opposition to all forms of Hindi imposition and Hindi hegemony over Tamil Nadu.

"Making a language (Hindi) that is the mother tongue of a region of India the official language for all the people of India is tyranny. We believe that it will give benefits and superiority to one region (the Hindi-speaking region).... Danger to the people of Tamil Nadu because of Hindi becoming the official language of India is great." - Former Tamilnadu Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai, at his trial for conspiracy to burn the Indian Constitution (December 3, 1963).

6. UPDATE (December 2017): Opposition in Karnataka

Tamil Nadu has been protesting against Hindi signs for decades. Now some other non-Hindi states are also opposing Hindi sign. We have seen Hindi milestones defaced in Karnataka State in 2017. That year also saw protests against Hindi signs at Bengaluru Metro (Namma Metro) in Karnataka. As protests mounted, metro authorities removed Hindi signs [Volume 10: Chapter 5].

(First Published: March 2005; Updated: December 2017)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

14.

Central Hindi Directorate and Your Tax Money

Parameshwari Balakrishnan

[This is a bonus article for this chapter. Unlike the other articles of this volume that discuss indirect Hindi imposition, this article discusses how large amounts of tax monies are spent for Hindi development and propagation.]

OUTLINE

1. Your Taxes at Work in Central Hindi Directorate
2. Final Words

1. Your Taxes at Work in Central Hindi Directorate (Kendriya Hindi Nideshalaya)

Central Hindi Directorate (Kendriya Hindi Nideshalaya) is a department within the Ministry of Human Resource Development and its sole purpose is to develop and promote Hindi. This department is funded by tax monies from all the people and businesses of India to promote and develop Hindi that is the mother tongue of about 40% of Indians concentrated in the North-Central region of India.

Activities funded by the Central Hindi Directorate include the following (all the activities listed in this section are from the Central Hindi Directorate website (as seen in July 2013)). We have added our own comments at appropriate places within square parentheses []

1.

Correspondence courses in Hindi at cut-rate prices (heavily subsidized by the Directorate--that is, heavily subsidized by Hindi and non-Hindi taxpayers). Correspondence course for "Advanced Diploma" costs only 300 Rupees. [You would have to spend thousands of Rupees to get Advanced Diploma in any other language. Why this discrimination against non-Hindi languages?]

2.

Hindi dictionaries for several foreign languages including Russian, Hungarian, Sinhala, Czech, Korean, Romanian, Bulgarian, Nepali, Arabic, Persian, Chinese and Polish. [We would have no complaint if the Indian Government would develop similar dictionaries for all the Indian languages listed in the constitution.]

3.

Financial grants to propagate Hindi in non-Hindi regions. Organizations in Tamil Nadu that received grants include Akhil Hindi Mahavidyalaya, (Coimbatore), Dakshin Bharat Hindi Parchar Sabha (Triuchirappalli, Ooty and several Chennai locations, Bhasha Sangam (Chennai) and Satyaseelate Gyanalaya (Chennai). Similar organizations in other non-Hindi regions also received grants. [How about grants to teach Malayalam or Telugu in other states?]

4.

Prizes to Hindi writers whose mother tongue is not Hindi and residing in non-Hindi states. [How about prizes to Bengali writers residing outside West Bengal or Marathi writers residing outside Maharashtra? Don't Bengalis and Marathis pay taxes too?]

5.

Awards to authors of "excellent and thought-provoking" Hindi books in social sciences, philosophy, political thought, culture, communication, moral science, science and technology, medical science, law, political science, environment and other subjects related to education. [Why single out authors of Hindi books? Don't other Indian languages count?]

6.

Hindi Writer's Workshop of non-Hindi-speaking regions (with a view to imparting latest detailed information about fiction, poetry, drama and other forms of Hindi literature as well of translation, journalism etc. to neo-Hindi writers of non-Hindi-speaking states). [Our criticism is "offer such workshops for all Indian languages"].

7.

Study tours of Hindi students of non-Hindi-speaking states to universities and voluntary Hindi organizations located across Hindi-speaking states. [Why a special perk for Hindi students only?]

2. Final Words

We want to point out that Central Hindi Directorate is not the only department that spends tax monies on Hindi, there are a number of other departments that spend tax monies on Hindi development and propagation too. Bonuses are given to Indian government employees who pass higher and higher level Hindi examinations; Hindi public speaking competitions, Hindi poetry contests are held and awards handed over, typing, Hindi word-processing, web development, translation trainings are offered; funds are offered to foreign universities to teach Hindi, etc. Very little or no encouragement for other Indian languages.

If one group of people take another group's money for the betterment of its own economy, culture and language, that is a form of slavery.

(First Published: September 2013)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for the next chapter

15.

Hindi and State Languages in Airline Flights

Vimala Kannappan

Our family is from Tamil Nadu. My husband is a software consultant. I live with my husband and our two daughters in America. A few years ago we wanted to come home to visit our family.

I went to a travel agency to buy airline tickets. A lady was at the front office. I told her our preferred dates of travel. Then I added, "Any airline other than Air India, please". She looked at me at askance, a pause, then said, "Not Air India?" I said, "Any airline other than Air India. We do not like hearing those Hindi announcements all through the flight."

"Don't know Hindi?", she asked.

I explained that we are from Tamil Nadu and that we oppose Hindi as India's official language.

The lady smiled with an amused expression and started looking for flights. At this time a gentleman came out from the back office. I recognized that he was Sikh, from his dress. The lady told him, "She is from Tamilnadu. She does not want to fly Air India because she does not want to listen to Hindi announcements."

He said, "OK. Book her in another airline." Then he turned to me, "Good for you. We respect Tamil Nadu for standing up for your language."

All of my husband's family avoids using Indian Government run businesses. I know it is not always possible. Whenever we can, we use alternate services even if it is a little inconvenient. We almost always travel by bus instead of using Indian Railways. We don't have accounts with Indian Government run banks. No one in our extended family flies Air India or Indian Airlines. Why should a Dubai to Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum) flight make announcements in Hindi and English? They should be in Malayalam, Arabic and English. Why should the announcements in Indian Airlines flights between Thiruchirapalli (Trichi) and Chennai (Madras) be in Hindi and English? They should be in Tamil and English.

UPDATE (January 2017)

As of 2017, a number of foreign airlines and India-based private airlines flying to destinations in India use the state language (Tamil in Chennai/Tamilnadu, Kannada in Bengaluru/Karnataka, Malayalam in Thiruvananthapuram/Kerala, etc.). We thank each and every one of them. Some of them provide menus printed in the state language as well as show in-flight movies in the state language. Contact the airlines' customer service or Facebook page to check if your mother tongue is available in their flights.

UPDATE (November 2019)

In the 1990s when Mr. Vajpayee was the Prime Minister of India, his government promised that announcements on flights from or to Tamil Nadu airports would be made in Tamil also. We are now into 2019 and still no Tamil announcements. No Tamil menus or inflight movies either (Tamil menus and movies are available in some foreign airlines). In late 2019, Tamil Nadu State government said that flight announcements would be made in state languages also. Indian government might have told them so. It is **overdue by over 50 years** since Hindi announcements started.

(First Published: July 2003; Updated: November 2019)

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for "List of the 15 Volumes of Hindi Imposition Papers"

List of Hindi Imposition Papers (15 volumes)

The following e-books are available FREE on the Internet in the same web site you found this book. If not, you may also find it at <https://archive.org/details/texts>
Search by book title.

Also, if you like this book please tell your friends or e-mail them the book or link to the book. You may also post links and comments about the book on media sites (facebook, twitter, ...) or discussion forums of your choice. Thank you.

Volume 1: Principal Articles

Volume 2: Hindi Imposition Diary

Volume 3: History of Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitations in Tamil Nadu

Volume 4: Hindi Imposition Through Educational Institutions

Volume 5: Hindi Imposition at Indian Government Offices

Volume 6: Quotes from Hindi and Non-Hindi Leaders

Volume 7: Hindi Hegemony in Indian Parliament

Volume 8: Hindi Propagation in Foreign Countries

Volume 9: Hindi Supremacy and Arrogance

Volume 10: Hindi Imposition by Hook or by Crook (Indirect Hindi Imposition in India)

Volume 11: Illegal Hindi Imposition Beyond the Constitution

Volume 12: Power of Hindi Politicians

plus

India is for Hindi Speakers Only

Volume 13: Hindi Imposition and Opposition Around India

plus

Special Favours to Hindi-Centric Industries

Volume 14: Hindi in Post-1965 Tamil Nadu

Volume 15: Safety, Health and Welfare of Non-Hindis at Risk

plus

Computers, Internet and Hindi

[Back to Table of Contents](#) or Scroll down for ""List of More Free E-Books from Us"

More Free E-books

The following e-books are available FREE on the Internet in the same web site you found this book. If not, you may also find it at **<https://archive.org/details/texts>**
Search by book title.

India - Current Affairs

The Failed Indian Democracy: Devolution is the Solution

Economic Discrimination of South India (With Examples from Tamil Nadu)

Hindi Imposition Papers (15 volumes)

Hindi, India and the United Nations: Opposing View from Non-Hindi Indians

Tamil Nadu

Early History of Dravidian Parties in Tamil Nadu: 1916-1959

A Political History of Dravidian Movement and Parties in Tamil Nadu

Economic Discrimination of South India (With Examples from Tamil Nadu)

Indian Interference in the Internal Affairs of Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu: Historical Perspectives, Distortions and Blackouts

A Political Biography of Tamil Nationalist Poet Pavalareru Perunjchiththirana

Dark Clouds over Tamil Nadu (Cauvery Water, NEET, Jallikattu, Navodaya Schools and Fishermen Shootings)

The Two Golden Ages of Tamil Nadu and the Current Dark Days

Lighter Side of Life and Politics in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Language

Tamil Language: River Valley Civilization to Silicon Valley Civilization

Indian Government Interference in Internet Tamil: (Tamil Language in the Age of Computers, Electronics and Internet)

Indian Government and Tamil Language (Ancient Rivalries and Current Tug of War)

Tamil in Tamil Nadu Schools, Colleges and Universities

Tamil Today: Some Thoughts and Musings

Battle for Tamil Eelam

Tamil Nadu and the Battle for Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)

India and the Battle for Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)

United States of America and the Battle for Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)

International Community and the Battle for Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)

Thoughts and Musings on the Battle for Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)

Books in Tamil

தமிழ்நாட்டின் இரு பொற்காலங்களும், இன்றைய இருள் காலமும்
(வரலாறு) - தஞ்சை நலங்கிள்ளி

The Two Golden Ages of Tamil Nadu and the Current Dark Days (History) (Tamil book)
by Thanjai Nalankilli

தமிழ்நாடு இந்தி எதிர்ப்புப் போராட்டங்களும், தீக்குளிப்புகளும் -
தஞ்சை நலங்கிள்ளி

Tamil Nadu Anti-Hindi Agitations and Self-Immolations (Tamil book) by Thanjai
Nalankilli

END OF BOOK

[Back to Table of Contents](#)